



# Foggy Bottom Rambles



FLO's Best Resources

Unaccompanied Tours Newsletter

September 2009

## What to Find

- Why the new name and look?
- Space saving tips
- A new Yahoo group for Afghanistan
- Email program for kids
- Reunion/after UT

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## Hot off the Press Newsletter! New name, new look

Hi Community!

You may have noticed that the usual "Keeping our Heads Above Water" newsletter debuts a new look and a whole new name – Foggy Bottom Rambles. Why the change you ask? We wanted to put a more positive spin on the newsletter with a name that reflects how we (back here in DC, Foggy Bottom area) provide information (rambles) to you. We know that there may be times when you do feel like you're keeping your head above water and we're here for you with resources to get you through the harder times. In this newsletter, you'll still find the same sections (tips from the field, about town, websites, hooch section, upcoming programs and events, and book club) as before in a hopefully more reader-friendly format. Check out our new Rambles' Musings section at the end. Let us know what you think! We've anticipated a couple questions and have the answers below:

### *Q: How did you come up with this name?*

A: Well, we wish we could take credit for the creative name, but that goes to...

**Troy Cleveland.** Troy, at a PRT in Iraq, submitted it after we asked for suggestions a couple months ago. Thank you to everyone who submitted names! It was a really tough decision and we have some very talented folks out there.

### *Q: How can I contribute to the Rambles?*

A: If anyone is interested in writing an article or sharing a tip/resource for the next issue, send it in to [FLOaskUT@state.gov](mailto:FLOaskUT@state.gov) and let us know if you prefer we didn't use your name. Short stories, pictures, poems, and other contributions are welcome. Think of this as an Embassy/Consulate newsletter where FLO Unaccompanied Tours (UT) is the "post".

### *Q: What's with the new UT logo? It reminds me of the DC Metro logo.*

A: Good eyes, reader! Yes, our new UT logo is very similar to the DC Metro logo and for good reason. There is a Foggy Bottom Metro stop (closest metro stop to Main State); Metro's slogan is "Metro opens doors" and we hope to open doors to your UT whether you are an employee at one of the unaccompanied posts or have family or a friend posted there; and finally, we want to be your stop for tips, resources, and information to help you manage the UT.



Q's answered

Facts revealed

Visit us

History buffs

## Cover story con't.

### *Q: Why is Foggy Bottom so foggy and whose bottom are we talking about?*

A: The name "Foggy Bottom" arose from the fact that the area where the State Department is located is at the *bottom* of the Potomac waterfront (ie marshy banks + river water = prone to fog). Back in the day, this environment, combined with the poor air circulation made the area prone to fog. The Potomac's shoreline was defined by the escarpment, or steep hills, which trapped air in this low-lying area – Washingtonians still experience this on hot, summer nights. Just ask us about the humidity!

Foggy Bottom got its name before the State Department headquarters called it home in 1941, after initial construction on the building began in 1939. Some facts (thanks [Wikipedia](http://history.state.gov/departmentshistory/buildings/section28)): <http://history.state.gov/departmentshistory/buildings/section28>

- Other aliases: [Harry S. Truman](#) Building, Main State, Foggy Bottom, HST
- Over **8,000 people** call this 'home' between the hours of 8:15 – 5 PM, M-F, however there are people working around the clock, every second of every day. I know, I've been here at 3 AM on a Saturday. No, the Secretary wasn't hosting an afterhours party. Yes, I was participating in a Task Force monitoring N'Djamena's evacuation.
- There is over **1,500,000 square feet** of useable space. Now don't ask, you know we can't tell you what goes on in all those feet! We are of course happy to share what we do here in our 196 square feet in our FLO UT Office.
- The Secretary of State's office is here (but we think you knew that one).
- Over **4,000 windows** surround the building (our office, however, remains windowless)
- We're currently under a long remodeling process (**12 years** plan total). Editor's observation - Somehow we can build embassies faster than we can renovate headquarters...I'm thinking Baghdad in particular, but let's not go there in this issue.



*Walk a mile in my shoes...* interested in checking out Foggy Bottom, either in person or on the web? Visit

<http://www.culturaltourismdc.org/information2550/information.htm?area=2525> for a map and locations of all the sights in the area.

*Craving historical info?* Check out the State Department's Office of the Historian <http://history.state.gov/> to learn about official historical documentary record of U.S. foreign policy in the [Foreign Relations of the United States](#).

UT articles  
highlighted in  
State Magazine

Space Savers

## Cover story con't.

### *Q: So, why are you telling me this?*

A: One of our FLO UT philosophies is that the more you (employee, family, friends) feel a part of the State Department, the work we do both in Washington and abroad, the more we feel like a community/family during these unaccompanied tours when separated from family and friends. You are a part of the State Department family!

### *Wanna know what's happening at State (that's code for State Department) and at our Missions overseas?*

Check out *State Magazine* (<http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/statemag/>) and be sure to read these:

In July/August 2009 <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/126715.pdf>:

- **"Bureaus' Job Fair Focuses on Three Posts"** (Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iraq) (p. 6)
- **"High Stress House Calls: MED Program Cares for Those in Harm's Way"** (ie unaccompanied tours) (p. 47)

In September 2009 <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/128806.pdf>

- **"Direct from [new] DG Nancy J. Powell: Honored to Serve"** (p. 2) She lists as one of the most pressing issues, "Ensuring that we are providing comprehensive support to our employees and their families before, during and after their overseas assignments, particularly those serving in difficult and/or unaccompanied posts."
- **"HR Bureau Honors Departing DG"** (p. 8) with a picture of departing Director General (DG) Harry K. Thomas, Jr. with FLO Director Leslie Teixeira who presented the DG with a Medal and Certificate of Recognition thanking him for his commitment to supporting unaccompanied tours employees and family members. The medal and certificate are remarkably similar to the over 1,000 certificates he signed for our unaccompanied tours children.
- **"Civics Class: Iraqi students learn the value of elections"** (p.20)
- **"Mission Ready: RSO in Iraq promotes emergency preparedness"** (p.30)

### *Who Moved my Hooch?*

Here are a few more great websites with all kinds of interesting ideas and thoughts on making the most out of a small space!

- iReporters sacrifice square footage

<http://>

[www.cnn.com/2008/LIVING/11/20/smallspace.irpt/index.html?iref=mpstoryview](http://www.cnn.com/2008/LIVING/11/20/smallspace.irpt/index.html?iref=mpstoryview)

- 20 Tips for Living in Small Spaces (from Japanese blogspot)  
<http://myso-calledjapaneselife.blogspot.com/2007/02/20-tips-for-living-in-small-spaces.html>
- 20 Tips for Living in Small Spaces (from TreeHugger)  
[http://www.treehugger.com/files/2007/10/20\\_tips\\_for\\_liv.php](http://www.treehugger.com/files/2007/10/20_tips_for_liv.php)
- Small Space Survival Strategies  
<http://www.wisebread.com/small-space-survival-strategies>



End of the UT

Children's email

Read/see country  
information

## Tips from the Field

### *We're not quite there yet, but maybe you are - Reunion and End of the UT*

Our website: <http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo/c14521.htm> will soon be featuring a After the UT section with lots of resources and information. In the meantime, check out this website:

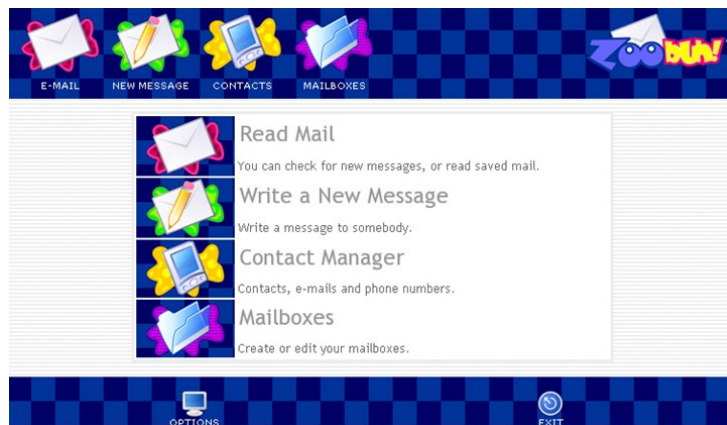
<http://www.hooah4health.com/deployment/Familymatters/reunion.htm>. Yes, it is geared towards the military, but much of it is still relevant to civilian deployments. Military Deployment Guide, Reunion Section includes:

- Five Phases of Reunion
- Reducing Homecoming Strain
- Problem Solving Steps
- Fighting Fair

### *Zoobomafoo? Getting warmer...It's Zoobuh!*

<http://www.zoobuh.com/>

I found this website where you can set up parental controls like restricting with whom my kids can communicate. It's really easy for my 9 year old to use!



### *Nat Geo – more than just the Dog Whisperer*

My brother's at a PRT in Afghanistan and I wanted to read up on the country. National Geographic has some amazing images, articles, and video clips that helped give me an overview about what life, the countryside, and the people are like. It's hard having him over there because I worry, but at least by reading up on the country and what's going on, it helps me feel more a part of the work he's doing.

[http://travel.nationalgeographic.com/places/countries/country\\_afghanistan.html](http://travel.nationalgeographic.com/places/countries/country_afghanistan.html)

(Editor's note: you can also find info about other countries whether it be Sudan, Iraq, or Indonesia.)





## Websites and Information

*You know the saying “no news is good news”? Well this is news and it is good!*

Check out *FLO Direct News*’ summer edition (<http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/128400.pdf>) for the latest updates from FLO, including the UT Officer’s (ie one of the’ editors of this newsletter) March/April trip to Baghdad and Kabul (amongst other posts) on page 2. Sherri’s also in this newsletter. See if you can spot her!

*Extra, Extra, Read all about it!*

Check out the Foreign Service Youth Foundation (FSYF) September newsletter - <http://www.fsyf.org/newsletter/Aug09Newsletter.pdf> to find out how to attend the upcoming college workshop in Virginia, see the colorful artwork submitted to the State Department Federal Credit Union (SDFCU) art contest, and read about how other kids spent their summers. Also see their new website: [www.fsyf.org](http://www.fsyf.org).

*Children flock to Foggy Bottom*

Also, in case you missed the annual July Youth Awards Ceremony or attended and want to see your face on the big screen, check out the video here:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dFTADdTO8I4>. Part of the ceremony recognized our unaccompanied tour children who received medals and certificates of recognition. Interested in nominating your child? Visit <http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo/c14521.htm>.

*Doris Duke and Islamic Art?*

<http://www.shangrilahawaii.org/>

You betcha! Shangri La is the Honolulu home of Doris Duke. Built in 1937, Shangri La houses an impressive collection of Islamic art and is considered one of Hawaii’s most architecturally significant homes. Shangri La is open to the public for tours and special programs, and can also be visited by virtual tour. Shangri La is the Honolulu home of Doris Duke. Built in 1937, Shangri La houses an impressive collection of Islamic art and is considered one of Hawaii’s most architecturally significant homes. Shangri La is open to the public for tours and special programs, and can also be visited by virtual tour. (images and text from website)



*Join the new Yahoo group for Afghanistan*

FSAfghanistan is a forum for the entire Foreign Service community, (FSOs, Specialists, DS and family members,) to discuss issues, share experiences and exchange information about service in Afghanistan. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/FSAfghanistan/>

FLO Direct News

Youth newsletter

Awards ceremony

Islamic art

FSAfghanistan

## Book Club

In honor of Agatha Christie week (September 13<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup>) be sure to read “The Gate of Baghdad” and “They Came to Baghdad”. In the short story “[The Gate of Baghdad](#)”, 12 people are traveling from the Oriental Hotel in Damascus to Baghdad, but only ten arrive. The journey covers 400 miles of desert in thirty-six hours and Agatha Christie does a great job of capturing the atmosphere of lunch from a cardboard box, evening stop at Rutbah for “many courses of the tinned variety” as well vehicle breakdowns and tea and fried sausages for breakfast.

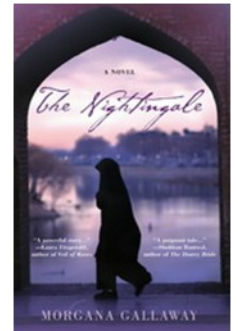


Baghdad is the chosen location for a secret superpower summit in “[They Came to Baghdad](#)”. Unfortunately an underground organization is planning to sabotage the talks. The main character, Victoria Jones, a girl with a yearning for adventure, finds more excitement than she would like when a wounded agent dies in her hotel room. This novel is a departure from Christie’s normal murder mysteries but was well received by most critics. Anthony Boucher wrote in The New York Times, “All in all, the most satisfactory novel in some years from one of the most satisfying of novelists”.

Check out more interesting facts and trivia about Agatha Christie at <http://www.agathachristie.com/>

### *The Nightingale* by Morgana Gallaway

Set in modern Mosul, Iraq, this book offers a glimpse into the challenges of everyday life and the changes war brings to a family. Leila al-Ghani and her family lived very well during the regime of Saddam Hussein, but when Hussein’s regime is toppled, Leila’s once-modern family begins to shift towards conservatism. Leila finds she is living in a very dangerous city which may hinder her goal of becoming a doctor.



Check out the complete list online:

<http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo/>

Gate of Baghdad

They came to  
Baghdad

The Nightingale

Disclaimer

The Foggy Bottom Rambles is published every month by the State Department’s Family Liaison Office’s (FLO) Unaccompanied Tours (UT) Office. It is intended for employees who will be and are serving at unaccompanied posts and their family members. The views presented herein are not the official policies of the Department of State or the United States Government. Any mention of commercial products, information services, travel destinations or any other resource does not constitute endorsement by any official entity and is provided exclusively for the personal convenience and entertainment of our readers. Portion of disclaimer originated from Tigris Times. Direct any and all questions, comments, suggestions, or contributions to [FLOaskUT@state.gov](mailto:FLOaskUT@state.gov).

## Around Town...DC that is

### *Never leave that till tomorrow which you can do today.*

Following the words of Ben Franklin, a group of family members in the DC area joined us for a tour of the Diplomatic Reception Rooms at U.S. Department of State. These rooms reflect the best of America's early cultural accomplishments and are frequently used to greet distinguished visitors. After the tour, we grabbed a cup o' joe to continue the conversations. Keep your eyes peeled for more upcoming events (and tours quarterly).

### *All dressed up and no place to go*

Did you know Hotel Monaco at 480 King Street, Alexandria, Virginia hosts a Yappy Hour on Tuesday and Thursdays from 5-8 p.m., April through October? Cats are invited too, if they are brave enough to attend. Hotel Helix in Logan Circle has one on Wednesdays. Get ready for howling good time! Find dog friendly city guides:



### [Dog-Friendly City Guides](#)

(lodging, attractions, cafes, stores, parks)

[Washington D.C.](#)

[Maryland Suburbs](#)

[Northern Virginia](#)

Ha ha!

## Made You Laugh?

### *Knowing when to take control*

A rookie police officer was assigned to ride in a cruiser with an experienced partner. A call came over the car's radio telling them to disperse some people who were loitering. The officers drove to the street and observed a small crowd standing on a corner.

The rookie rolled down his window and said, "Let's get off the corner."

No one moved, so he barked again, "Let's get off the corner!"

Intimidated, the group of people began to leave, casting puzzled glances in his direction.

Proud of his first official act, the young policeman turned to his partner and asked, "Well, how did I do?"

"Pretty good," replied the veteran, "especially since this was a bus stop."

*(Found on various internet joke sites)*

Recent family  
gathering in DC

Dog friendly DC

Rookie mistake

## Rambles' Musings

Each August for the past 11 years, Beloit College in Beloit, Wis., has released the Beloit College Mindset List. It provides a look at the cultural touchstones that shape the lives of students entering college at this very moment. It is the creation of Beloit's Keefer Professor of the Humanities Tom McBride and Public Affairs Director Ron Nief. The List is shared with faculty and with thousands who request it each year as the school year begins, as a reminder of the rapidly changing frame of reference for this new generation. Boy, do I feel old!

### Who to Contact

Unaccompanied Tours Direct:

[FLOaskUT@state.gov](mailto:FLOaskUT@state.gov)

The Family Liaison Office

(M/DGHR/FLO)

Harry S Truman Building,

Room 1239

Department of State

Washington, DC 20520

Tel: (202) 647-1076,

or (800) 440-0397



**FLO**

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

*Advocacy Programs Services*

### *The Beloit College Mindset List for the Class of 2013*

Most students entering college for the first time this fall were born in 1991.

1. The Green Giant has always been Shrek, not the big guy picking vegetables.
2. They have never used a card catalog to find a book.
3. Margaret Thatcher has always been a former prime minister.
4. Salsa has always outsold ketchup.
5. They have been preparing for the arrival of HDTV all their lives.
6. Rap music has always been main stream.
7. Chocolate chip cookie dough ice cream has always been a flavor choice.
8. Someone has always been building something taller than the Willis (née Sears) Tower in Chicago.
9. The KGB has never officially existed.
10. Text has always been hyper.
11. Babies have always had a Social Security Number.
12. They have never had to "shake down" an oral thermometer.
13. Bungee jumping has always been socially acceptable.
14. They have never understood the meaning of R.S.V.P.
15. Except for the present incumbent, the President has never inhaled.
16. State abbreviations in addresses have never had periods.
17. The European Union has always existed.
18. McDonald's has always been serving Happy Meals in China.
19. Cable television systems have always offered telephone service and vice versa.
20. Christopher Columbus has always been getting a bad rap.
21. The American health care system has always been in critical condition.
22. Bobby Cox has always managed the Atlanta Braves.
23. Desperate smokers have always been able to turn to Nicoderm skin patches.
24. There has always been a Cartoon Network.
25. They have always been able to read books on an electronic screen.

Read the rest: <http://www.beloit.edu/mindset/2013.php>



Gotcha! We just thought this would make you smile!